

April 23, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H.R. 7988, the Health Research and Health Services Amendments of 1976.

This bill will extend through fiscal year 1977 and increases the authorizations for the heart, lung, blood disease and national research service awards programs; modifies authorizations for the arthritis program; authorizes grants for new programs, i.e., genetic diseases and visiting scientist awards; and limits authority of FDA to regulate vitamins and minerals.

H.R. 7988 will:

- provide explicit and broadened authority for the NHLI to conduct programs with respect to the use of blood products and the management of blood resources,
- redesignate the Institute as the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, and,
- provide that the 30 research centers currently authorized in law be divided equally among the heart, lung, and blood research areas.

H.R. 7988 will repeal the present categorical authorities for research and other activities relating to sickle cell disease and Cooley's anemia and substitute a more comprehensive categorical program for genetic diseases testing, counseling, information, and education. The bill will include at least nine different genetic diseases as eligible for funding, but would require that priority be given to sickle cell and Cooley's anemia projects.

Under the provisions of H.R. 7988, the HEW Secretary will be prohibited from (1) imposing maximum limits on the potency of vitamins and minerals and other dietary supplements,
(2) specifying only limited combinations of vitamins or minerals which can be marketed, and (3) classifying a vitamin or minerals as a drug solely because it exceeds the level or potency that HEW determines is nutritionally rational or useful.

HEW will still retain authority to initiate enforcement action against a food or vitamin product if its labeling or advertising is false or misleading. HEW will also be granted new authority over the advertising or vitamins, minerals, and other non-prescription drugs.

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